

The Coming Day.

SEPTEMBER, 1898.

THE ALLEGED PROPHECIES CONCERNING JESUS CHRIST IN THE OLD TESTA- MENT.

SIX LECTURES—REVISED.

I.

INTRODUCTORY.

ONE of the oldest, most popular and most effective arguments in favour of the view that Jesus Christ was God, or at all events, a miraculous or supernatural and therefore exceptional being, is the alleged existence of passages in the Old Testament which are held to be predictions of his birth, mission, character, life and death. This argument has appealed to a variety of peculiarities in human nature. People who could not appreciate a close train of reasoning, or be influenced by purely moral and spiritual considerations, have their sense of wonder gratified and their imagination excited by the consideration that the coming of Jesus and the circumstances of his birth, life and death, were all foretold, ages before he appeared.

And here, at the very outset, I fully admit that the New Testament does more or less distinctly set forth Jesus Christ as the fulfiller of Old Testament predictions. The passages will come before us afterwards; here it will be enough to admit that the fact is so. But, while admitting that, we are forced on to the question,—What then? Even in cases where there is a definite assertion of fulfilled prophecy, are we to give in to the evangelists without personal examination and the use of our own judgments? To do so would not only be foolish but base.

But the question is a far more complex one than it appears to be. As we go on, we find we are obliged to ask such questions, for instance, as these:—Were these alleged fulfilments of Old Testament prophecies afterthoughts? Did the Old Testament prediction suggest and half compel the New Testament fulfilment? Did Jesus himself believe that he was the fulfiller of Old Testament prophecies? If so, how far did he consciously try to fulfil them, and, as it were, lay himself out for their fulfilment? Or, if Jesus did hold that he fulfilled the Old Testament prophecies, did he not also lift those prophecies into an entirely new region, giving a moral and spiritual meaning and value to an altogether political and material reference? If so, how far did he suggest the higher truth, that not only he, but that any moral and spiritual reformer may be a true fulfiller of Old Testament prophecies—their fulfilment being not a personal but a perpetual one;—so that he claimed to be the Messiah, as he also claimed to be a son of God, not as an exceptional being, but as one who presented conditions and reaped blessings within the reach of us all?

The question thus becomes forced upon us, whether the evangelists themselves, in stating that such and such prophecies were fulfilled in Jesus Christ, really meant that the Old Testament prophecy referred to him, or only that it spiritually received its moral and religious fulfilment in him. Jesus himself certainly never gave in to the political and material hopes of the nation, and neglected, in a striking and defiant manner, the obvious political and material references of the prophecies. He announced that he came to fulfil, but he only fulfilled by spiritualising, and by acting out on a heavenly stage the drama intended for an earthly one. It will thus be seen that the question is far from settled, even when we have admitted that the evangelists held the Old Testament prophecies had been fulfilled in Christ.

When we, however, examine these passages in the New Testament which affirm fulfilments of passages in the Old, several very curious facts come to light; these, for instance,—that many of the passages from the Old Testament, quoted by

the writers of the New, are mere descriptions, misread or used by them as prophecies; or that, as quotations, they are vague, or palpably inaccurate, or mere illustrations.

Take, for instance, as illustrative of the use of mere descriptions as prophecies, the following: In Matt. xiii. 14, 15, we find it stated that Jesus spoke in parables to the people, because they were dull and blind, and because it was 'not given' to them to know 'the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven;' and 'in them,' we are expressly told was 'fulfilled the prophecy of Esaias, which saith, By hearing ye shall hear, and shall not understand: and seeing ye shall see, and shall not perceive: for this people's heart is waxed gross, and their ears are dull of hearing, and their eyes they have closed; lest at any time they should see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and should understand with their heart, and should be converted, and I should heal them.' In John xii. 37-41, the passage is quoted with the added statement, that the people 'could not believe' in Christ, 'because' Isaiah said or wrote that;—a horrible statement, which of itself demands of us a sharp scrutiny of these alleged fulfilments.

Now what do we find in the passage itself in the Old Testament? We find not a prophecy at all, but a statement of fact—a description of the dull, blind condition of the people in Isaiah's time. And it is this description of a fact before the prophet's eyes that is taken as a prophecy of a far-distant event! Many other examples could be quoted,* but it is not necessary to encumber the lecture with texts. It is sufficient to point out here, and to lay emphasis on the fact, that Old Testament passages containing descriptions of present facts are taken by the New Testament writers as prophecies of future events.

Instances of the second kind, mere vague quotations, are as frequent. It is, in fact, one of the singular and most suggestive peculiarities of these quotations, that they are often so vague and far-fetched as to almost hint, after all, that the quoters did not really mean to suggest that the

* See Luke iv. 26-21; John ii. 17; John xiii. 18; John xix. 36; Acts i. 16-20; Heb. x. 47.

Old Testament writers actually intended to point out the events of New Testament times, and to hint further, that the New Testament writers only used the Old Testament passages as descriptive illustrations. In one place, Matt. xxvi. 56, we have the vague general statement, that 'all this was done, that the scriptures of the prophets might be fulfilled.' And yet the very vagueness and generality here may indicate that the writer really regarded the events he alluded to as actual fulfilments of Old Testament prophecies. In Matt. ii. 23 we have the statement that Jesus dwelt in Nazareth, 'that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophets, "He shall be called a Nazarene."' But such a passage is nowhere to be found. In John xv. 25, we have the very vague statement concerning the Jews' hatred of Christ,— 'But this cometh to pass, that the word might be fulfilled that is written in their law, They hated me without a cause.' But it is well nigh impossible to fix upon any definite passage as that which is here said to be quoted. In John xix. 28, in a description of the crucifixion, we have this,—'After this, Jesus knowing that all things were now accomplished, that the scripture might be fulfilled, saith, I thirst.' Again, however, we look in vain for any definite 'scripture' where this is to be found. To say the least of it, it is utterly vague. In John xx. 9, we read that the disciples did not yet know the scriptures, that Jesus 'must rise again from the dead.' Here is the perfection of vagueness. Where are the scriptures that prophecy the resurrection of Jesus? The evangelist does not tell; and most assuredly the Jews knew nothing in their own scriptures of a dying and rising Messiah.

Inaccurate quotations form another though a closely allied class of quotations from the Old in the New Testament. One fact is important, that the majority of the passages in the New Testament quoted from the Old, as fulfilled by Christ, are not taken from the Hebrew Bible at all, but from the Septuagint, a Greek translation of the Hebrew. The original writers of the Greek New Testament, then, quoted at second-hand from the Greek Old Testament, errors and all; and, in addition, often quoted from memory, and quoted wrongly.

Then, finally, we have passages that are purely illustrative, which are hardly quoted as fulfilments, such as John iii. 14, 15, ‘And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the son of man be lifted up: that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have eternal life.’ In a passage like that, we have suggested the possibility of a use of passages for the mere purpose of illustration and analogy, even where the formula occurs, ‘That it might be fulfilled.’

Besides these, we have a great number of passages to which, in subsequent lectures, your attention will be directed, as furnishing abundant examples of palpably inaccurate and forced application. Many of these are in the Gospels; others are to be found in the writings of Paul. Of these last, Mr. Jowett frankly said,—‘There is no evidence that the apostle remembered the verbal connection in which any of the passages quoted by him originally occurred. He isolates them wholly from their context; he reasons from them as he might from statements of his own, “going off upon a word,” as it has been called—in one instance, almost upon a letter (Gal. iii. 16), drawing inferences which, in strict logic, can hardly be allowed, extending the meaning of words beyond their first and natural sense. But all this only implies, that he uses quotations from the Old Testament after the manner of his age;’ so that this very emphatic and suggestive statement about Paul’s loose way of dealing with the Old Testament must be made applicable to other New Testament writers. That this must be so, I shall in future lectures abundantly prove.

The New Testament writers, then, extracted from Old Testament passages forced meanings and applications. In some cases, it is true, it may be difficult to say what the original passage means; in many others it is perfectly plain that the passages quoted do not for a moment mean what the New Testament writers make them mean. Again and again Old Testament passages, palpably referring to Old Testament times—to Hebrew politics, and national joys and sorrows, struggles, hopes, and fears—are violently torn from their connection and applied to New Testament events.

I shall prove that abundantly before I close. At the same time, I must again remind you that, in some cases, the writers of the New Testament may not have meant anything more than to use Old Testament passages as apt quotations, just as we do. How often do modern writers describe a thing by saying — ‘As Shakspeare says,’ or ‘In the words of the poet,’ or ‘As one has said,’ and then follows the apt quotation.* When I was preparing this lecture, my eyes fell upon a passage of this kind, in a pamphlet that came by post. The writer says,—‘ Well may we say in the words of Shakspeare, “Can this be true, can this be possible ?” ’ It would be ridiculous to say that the writer meant to suggest that Shakspeare intended to point to the thing this new writer denounced in Shakspeare’s words ; and yet it must be confessed that the quoting in the New Testament of so-called prophecies from the Old is often of this kind.

But, after making a liberal allowance for that, the fact seems to remain that the New Testament writers do deliberately quote from the Old Testament, for the purpose of affirming that the passages they quote were actually prophecies of Christ. Can we account for this ? I think we can. The New Testament writers probably believed that Jesus was, in a sense, the expected Messiah, and, if so, they would naturally take it for granted that what were regarded as Old Testament descriptions were applicable to him. If they remembered a passage that bore a verbal resemblance to what they were writing about, they quoted it ; if not, they felt so sure he did everything as the fulfiller of Scripture that they inserted only a general reference to the Scriptures, such as ‘That the Scriptures might be fulfilled.’ In the time of Christ, there was a revival of Messianic hopes and expectations. Pretenders and fanatics had arisen to gratify the eager longing of the nation, and it was of the greatest possible importance that the life of this

* From the play of Hamlet alone, we have taken out of their connection and applied to a thousand things, persons, or events, such phrases as these, for instance :—‘ Weary, stale, flat, and unprofitable’—‘ There are more things in heaven and earth than are dreamt of in your philosophy’—‘ Brevity is the soul of wit’—‘ Let the gall’d jade wince ; our withers are unwrung’—‘ More honoured in the breach than the observance’—‘ There’s method in his madness.’

candidate for Messianic honours should have his life, work and death, linked on to the Old Testament records. Innocently and naturally, therefore, the writers seized upon everything that could possibly help them. It mattered not to them that they tore a scrap from its context to furnish a fulfilment of prophecy; it mattered not to them that the passage they conveyed away plainly referred to ancient political events. Christ must have fulfilled all Scripture, and so all Scripture had to submit to be mutilated or appropriated, to furnish triumphant credentials to Christ. They were not dishonest, they were only fanatical: they did not intend to pervert and wrest the Scriptures, they only meant to glorify them by linking them to the life and work of their glorious Lord. They acted as the writer of the Epistle to the Hebrews acted when he assumed that Christ, as the true High Priest, and, strangely enough, as the perfect sacrifice also, fulfilled and completed in himself all old sacrificial forms and truths; or when he took the Jews on their own ground, as believers in those old sacrificial ideas, and showed them that divine and deeper purposes and transactions were accomplished by Christ. So indeed, may the other writers of the New Testament, in their affirmations of Christ's fulfilments of Old Testament prophecies, have mainly intended to show how far more gloriously this spiritual Messiah could fulfil the old national hopes than any agitator, warrior, or king.

But, we need not be surprised at the most literal appropriation of old records as prophecies of new events. We have only to remember the history of the Christian Church, from its first centuries until now. What the New Testament writers did, the Fathers did, the old Presbyterians and Puritans did, Oliver Cromwell did, Joseph Smith did. One of our own writers* has well indicated that fact,—‘Some persons have found, in every individual thing in Jewish Scriptures, a type and prophecy of something in the Christian. Swedenborg imagined a spiritual mystical sense to belong to the commonest incidents of the pa-

* Higginson's ‘Spirit of the Bible,’ Vol. II., p. 265.

triarchal and Jewish history. The Puritans and Scotch Covenanters applied to themselves, with undoubting faith, all the Old Testament promises and exhortations delivered to the Jews as the people of God; and they heartily launched against Popery, Prelacy and Monarchy, all the woes of the Hebrew Scriptures against Babylon, Tyre and Edom, the heathen and their idols!

The very morning on which I wrote these words, I saw a report of a statement, made by a popular preacher, that the Bible is everything or nothing, and that, as it was, in his opinion, everything, you must find in it prophecies of the French and German war, of Mr. Gladstone's assault upon the Vatican, and of all the Papal and anti-Papal struggles yet to come. How much more necessary would it appear to the New Testament writers, to find somewhere and somehow, in the Old Testament, references to one whom they believed to be the flower and consummation of the ages!

These observations have now led us on to the very heart of the subject. Admitting that the New Testament writers quote alleged prophecies from the Old, and that they held their literal fulfilment by and in the Christ of the New, it remains for us, as we have seen, to ask,—But what did the original writers themselves intend to say? Now, fortunately, we can answer that question. We have not only the Septuagint, from which the New Testament writers quoted, but the Hebrew Bible, with a vast amount of knowledge concerning it, far beyond that possessed by those writers; so that, in point of fact, we are better able to understand the Old Testament than they. But it needs no learning or profound research: it needs only honest English reading to get at the facts. The common plan is to cut out half-a-dozen lines, or to isolate a few verses, or, at most, a chapter, from the body of the work, and to read the passage by itself, altogether apart from the context. In that way you could make a passage mean almost anything. The only remedy for this is to go back to the original records, and to read straight on. If that be done, the plainest man who can read his English Bible will have the key to the alleged

prophecies. And what he will find out is this:—that, in every case, the alleged prophecy is more or less obviously, as a rule is quite obviously, a reference to current events, national and political. The so-called prophet will be seen to be an ardent politician, moralist, or reformer, profoundly interested in what is passing around him, and intent upon the working out of his own thoughts for the good of the nation. Sometimes he is the prophet of hope, sometimes of sorrow:—now telling of empire and glory, prosperity and peace, and now of despoiling and desolation and war; but always, and everywhere, he is an observer of the signs of the times, he lives in the present or the immediate future, his heart beats in unison with the mourning or the exultation of his day.

Dr. Milman, in his history of the Jews, points out that the writings of the prophets are 'magnificent lyric odes' which give 'a poetical history' of their 'momentous times,' and describe not only the future of the two Hebrew nations, but the fate of the adjacent kingdoms likewise. 'As each independent tribe or monarchy was swallowed up in the great universal empire of Assyria, the seers of Judah watched the progress of the invader, and uttered their sublime funeral anthems over the greatness and prosperity and independence of Moab and Ammon, Damascus and Tyre.' 'The poets of Judea,' says Dr. Milman, 'were pre-eminently national. It is on the existing state, the impending dangers and future prospects of Ephraim and Judah, that they usually dwell.' I cannot follow this writer in his after-thought, that at least one of the prophets mixed up with his political and national utterances prophecies of a Messiah whose advent should be delayed for more than 700 years. Any theory of that kind appears to me to be in the highest degree unnatural, forced and arbitrary.

Mr. Jowett plainly says that the Old Testament passages quoted by New Testament writers, are used 'almost always without reference to the connection in which they originally occur, and in a different sense from that in which the prophet or psalmist intended them: and it is that fact which makes it necessary to examine the alleged proph-

cies, and to resolutely see what it was that the original writer really meant. It is in doing this that we come across the undoubted fact that all the alleged prophecies of Christ in the Old Testament relate, in the original records, not to any remote future, not to any person unconnected with events then happening, but to scenes, circumstances, events and persons all livingly connected with the prophet's own time.

Having got thus far, our way is perfectly clear; and all I have to do is to follow these alleged prophecies home to their source, and see what they really mean there. It will be an interesting and a curious investigation, and one that will well repay us in the end. If, however, in prosecuting this inquiry, any of those who rely upon external evidences should lament to see one of the great buttresses crumble beneath our hand, let this be remembered,—that it cannot be a bad thing to know the truth, that it must be a bad thing to be depending on that which is ready to pass away, and that it can only be useful and good to lead God's children to rely upon the manifestations of Himself in the living soul.

FLOWERS.

SPOKEN AT CROYDON.

‘*Consider the lilies how they grow.*’—Luke xii. 27. FLOWERS and children;—Jesus seems to have considered and loved them both: and, if we may judge from his references to them, and to the birds, who, said he, lived their little lives in God, he was a dear lover of all nature’s beautiful and wonderful things. I don’t know how much emphasis the word will bear, but the word ‘consider’ here seems aptly chosen; and we need to emphasise it, for flowers are not things to be a little sentimental over, but to seriously ‘consider.’

Jesus spoke mainly of considering them as the patient objects of divine care, and he compared them with poor, restless, self-centred man. ‘They

'toil not, they spin not,' he said,' 'but they out-rival Solomon for splendour, and never lose their way.' He could not have meant anything so foolish as that we too ought to just remain still and grow: but he went down to the deep thought that all of us, flowers and men, are alike rooted in God,—that the mighty hand holds us all,—and that with all our restlessness, opposition and self assertion, the will of God will be done, after all:—not much being left to our choice, in the end:—a truly grand lesson in patience, hopefulness and trust.

But go a little deeper down, and we find that the questions—Whence came they? and Whither do they go? are questions which might as appropriately be asked concerning the flowers as concerning man himself. We know, indeed, that they spring from the dark dull soil; we know that the warm spring breath allures them, that the sun develops them, that the rains refresh them, and that the creative air of Heaven gives them fulness, fragrance and beauty. But, with all our superiority, we are utterly at fault and break down over the book which is the first book of Nature even as it is the first book in the Bible—the book of Genesis, or the origin of things. Yes, of the very humblest flower it may be said, 'Consider' it; it needs it: its tender roots touch the infinite mystery. A creation out of nothing it is unscientific to believe in, but whence came the roses of this one summer? I suppose their solid weight would be many thousands of tons. Whence came this mighty mass? Not a tint, not a line of loveliness, not a curve of beauty, not a blush, not a breath of fragrance, not an atom of substance, came out of nothing. Before the rose bud existed as a bud it existed as force somewhere. Nothing was created when the rose crept forth, and blushed in the face of day, apparently a new creation on the stem: but something had taken a new form. The unseen had become the seen: electric forces had resulted in deposits of matter: the spiritual rose had put on an outward form. Men talk of creation, and dwell upon the wonders of Paradise. Why creation has been as real a fact this year as ever it was, and God never more truly walked in

Eden than in every garden this summer where there bloomed a lily or a rose. Let us 'consider' this.

The first thing that strikes us, in looking at a flower, is its wonderful purity. Child of the soil as it is, it yet bears no trace of that from which it sprang. It may, on the contrary, have a perfect whiteness which serves as the most thrilling contrast to that soil—a very miracle of purity, springing from that which is the lowest of all forms of matter. And, as for colour, no artist's art has ever sufficed to reproduce on the costliest canvas the commonest production of the humblest country lane. George Herbert refers to this singular peculiarity of flowers, when he says

My God ! how sweet and clean are Thy returns,
E'en as the flowers in spring !

And, in those two lines, he gives us a beautiful thought connected with the purity of flowers,—the spiritual equivalent, so to speak, of that fact in nature. He refers to what he quaintly calls God's 'returns.' The spring-time, in the natural world, is such a return. The earth seems deserted by God in the winter-time. As the grand old pagans would have put it,—the sun-God has departed, and the reign of the Lord of desolation has begun. But, when spring returns, the sun-God, bright, smiling and potent, comes back, and the roots that were in hiding in the earth, during the hard weather, hear his voice and feel his touch ; and the loveliest and sweetest of all created things answer to his call. But to Christians, the sun-God is 'Our Father,' and it is His 'returns' that, as George Herbert says, are 'sweet and clean.' But he is speaking of other 'returns' of God, which he compares with the sweet and clean spring flowers;—he is referring to an experience of man : for we have our winters and summers, our desolations and growths, our dark hidings and bright forthcomings to the light: and it is of these he speaks. And truly it is so that God's 'returns' to our moral and spiritual natures are followed by effects comparable only to the 'sweet and clean' effects of spring. When the moral winter is over, and the dark, hard, cold nature is suffered to sun itself once

more in the light and life of God ;—when the roots and germs of moral good in the soul are touched with love to God and moved with a longing to live before him ; when the thrill of the new life comes into the heart, which begins to reply to God and to aspire after Him ; when the long night of doubt, or fear, or mere earthliness is over, and the spirit pants for the fresh air, and the clear sky, and the light of day, and for the beauty and fragrance of the upper world, then is there a summer in the soul, then the flowers appear on the moral earth, and sweet developments of character, hitherto all hidden and unknown, creep forth to life, and, from the earth-root ascend the supplianting hands, filled at last with the flowers of righteousness. That is what George Herbert was thinking of when he said, ‘ My God ! how sweet and clean are Thy returns, even as the flowers in spring,’ and that is the fair thought suggested by the purity of the flowers.

Think also of their wonderful beauty. Ugliness in that world is impossible. Quaintness there may be, oddness or eccentricity, but ugliness never : while, on the side of beauty, all the world has long agreed that God’s flowers are the loveliest creatures He has made. From the first formation of the bud, to its unfolding, and on to its perfect development, every stage is accompanied by new forms of beauty, new outlines of grace, new miracles of colour. I care not to whom or to what this beauty is attributed. In any case, it must have originated in some force whose tendency is for beauty, and of which we cannot help saying that it loves the beautiful : for how otherwise can we account for the persistent efforts of Nature to produce, to protect, to multiply, these lovely objects ? In secret places, where man exists not, either as guardian or observer, the urgent beauty breaks forth, appears, multiplies and protects itself as though urged on by a resistless will and an ardent lover of beautiful things.

And such variety ;—from the little weed that finds a home in the crevice of an old Northern fortress wall to the gorgeous growths of Southern climes ; from the delicate daisy, which lifts up its little banner in every field, to the choicer flowers

which art allures to rich men's houses. What a bountiful God it is! It is as though He would leave no stage unoccupied, no round of the ladder of beauty untrodden, no grade of glory unfilled. He might perhaps have made a world of Platos, Shakspeares and St. Johns; but He did not, and I am glad of it: I love His colliers and His costermongers. In like manner, He might have made the world of flowers a world of lilies, roses and azaleas; but He did not, and I am glad of that, too. There is not only charm in variety but there is education in it, and the possibilities of development which could never have existed in a world all of one pattern, or already perfect. So it is with the nations of the earth. Such a little planet, and yet what a variety of climates, of productions, of languages, of faces, of customs, of tastes, of stages of development! And nations are flower-growths on a larger scale;—they appear, expand and fall just as flowers do, and by laws just as invariable though not perhaps as obvious. And as with nations so with individuals. Each one of us is a flower in this garden of the Lord: though some, alas, are too like weeds. And we vary even as the flowers do, in our beauty, our rarity, our sweetness, and our habits. By the aid of this thought, as time goes on, we shall be able to grasp the full significance of the truth that underlies both the doctrines of freewill and necessity. A daisy cannot be a rose, and it would be both silly and cruel to burn it because it does not behave like a rose. It is a daisy, and it cannot be anything else. In like manner, it would be silly and cruel to ask the dirty ignorant child of a drunken dock-labourer to live like the child of the professor of divinity in the University. It would be the act of a fool to burn a daisy in anger because it did not bloom like a rose: it would be the act of a devil to burn the child of a drunkard because it did not develop into a saint. We have much to learn on this point, and are still far from a sound and just doctrine concerning the limits of human responsibility. If strict justice were done, how often would the judge change places with the prisoner at the bar!

But here comes in another analogy which

suggests a world of hope concerning the less favoured forms of humanity. The flowers of the garden and the conservatory are developments from inferior productions. God does not grow at once and at first hand the roses, the carnations, the fuchsias, the geraniums, the azaleas, and the lilies, as we have them in garden and conservatory, any more than He grows at once and at first hand the peach, the plum, and the apple of the orchard. These are all developments from inferior forms. God supplies us with four things,—the raw material, curiosity, desire and brains. But mark this,—the possibility must be in the raw material : and the possibility *is* in the raw material. The wild rose, the wild hyacinth, the wild strawberry, the wild crab-apple, the wild lily, can all, by art, be trained to rich, sweet and useful forms of life. So that art, after all, is only skill applied to help nature. For art and nature are not in conflict, are not independent one of the other. ‘Nature,’ says Lord Bacon, ‘is commanded by obeying her.’ And that is art ;—careful and skilful obedience to nature, so as to draw out her possibilities and make them actual.

So with these human flowers. The lower stages present themselves for culture and development. This is the true way to look at ignorance and vice. It would be an atrocious thing to think of God (as some do nevertheless) as the creator of this world with all its diversities of character and power, as the only scene of probation, the only chance for souls, whose lot would be eternal misery hereafter if they could not reach the higher stages of being here. I say that would be to attribute to God the malignity of a fiend, and the absurdity of a maniac : for it is simply impossible that some low forms of human life can here be developed into the higher forms. The only difficulties in the way of human development are time, care and skill. Every human being, like every wild flower, has in it the possibility of development into a higher stage : but time is needed, care is needed, opportunity is needed, and skill is needed. In other words, education or culture is needed : and it is simply impossible that all can receive that here. It is this that supplies us with one of the most pro-

found and pathetic arguments in favour of a future life.—I mean the absolute impossibility of doing here all that is to be done,—the absolute impossibility, in many cases, of fulfilling an obvious destiny.

In connection with that, note how much Nature always leaves to us, and how equal and generous she is to us, beyond this mysterious rim of necessity which determines our present condition. One man is born poor, the child of degraded parents, the inmate of a degraded home, just as a daisy is born a daisy and not a rose. But, beyond this primal fact which, I admit, is mysterious enough, Nature treats all alike, offers her gifts to all alike. In the orthodox sense of the word, there is no doctrine of election known to Nature. Her rain descends and her sun shines on the daisy and the rose, on the evil and on the good, on the just and on the unjust ; and she cries to all—‘ Whosoever will, let him come, and take the water of life freely.’ And each child of the soil hears her voice and takes that from her which is appropriate to its own life. But there is this difference between the flower and the man,—that the flower is bound to its lot, and has no volition and no skill of its own, to advance from a lower to the higher stage ; while man has. He can call on his reserve-fund of human force ; he can decide to push himself on ; he can go hither and thither to find more fitting soil : he can cross the road to the sunny side ; he can rebel against the fate that seemed to destine him for degradation. And Nature, who has no elect, will meet him at every step, and bless and succour him ; and sometimes bring a child of darkness into wonderful light.

One more thought. We do not, with the unaided eye, see all or even the chief loveliness of the flowers. Ruskin has referred, in one of his letters, to a singular fact concerning, not only flowers, but all other things. ‘ Yesterday,’ he says, ‘ I called on Mr. H. C. Sorby, to see some of the results of an inquiry he has been following all last year, into the nature of the colouring matter of leaves and flowers. You most probably have heard, or, at all events, may with little trouble hear, of the marvellous power which chemical

-analysis has received in recent discoveries respecting the laws of light. My friend shewed me the rainbow of the rose, and the rainbow of the violet, and the rainbow of the hyacinth, and the rainbow of forest leaves being born, and the rainbow of forest leaves dying.' So that it appears we do not see all there is to see: and if the instrument were adapted to it, I doubt not it would shew you the 'rainbow' of the woman, and the 'rainbow' of the man, the 'rainbow' of the sinner, and the 'rainbow' of the saint, the 'rainbow' of the mother, and the 'rainbow' of her child, ay! and perhaps the 'rainbow' of the mother when she smiles and the 'rainbow' of the mother when she frowns: and perhaps it would be discovered that just as every flower has its own light, its own glory about it, enfolding it and proceeding from it, so every human being has: this singular fact being probably connected with questions of temperament and character, and accounting in a suggestive manner for the antipathies and the sympathies that sometimes appear to us altogether unaccountable.

But this is a thought which opens a new and vast field of inquiry, and I must turn away from the tempting prospect. On the whole, this brief study on flowers leaves us with hopeful thoughts. God, who writes His messages in the earth in such lovely characters, rebukes the doubting souls who teach us the earth is accursed, or that everything is going to the bad. It is a beautiful world, and it is, in some respects, most beautiful where it is found as God leaves it, before man scars, darkens and defiles it. In that there is an infinite source of hope for us. The God of beauty will surely perfect His own work,—will mend our defects, make up for our mistakes, heal our diseases, make this scarred old earth and human society upon it more and more beautiful, and, one day, bring us to the true 'garden of the Lord,' where all things are beautiful, gracious and immortal:—and perish, never, never more.

THE NEW LIGHT ON ISAIAH.*

AN impressive revelation is this book of Isaiah, in 'The Polychrome Bible,' which is as much a book for the people as for the teachers of the people. As we go slowly past these amazing pages, we are positively thrilled with their vitality. It is as though a luminous book emerged from a confused mass of manuscripts,—or as though a fine melody crept forth from a medley of sounds.

It is very difficult, within our limits, to do any sort of justice to the many uses and excellencies of this great work: but we must draw special attention to the fact that it is a highly typical specimen of the ancient construction and editing which account for so much in the Bible. This book of Isaiah, for instance, is really largely a composite work, made up of fragments belonging to periods almost any time within, say, 400 and 740 B.C. Dr. Cheyne commences his enlightening notes with these striking remarks;—

It was a practice of the late editors to ensure the preservation of anonymous prophecies by inserting them in the acknowledged works of well-known prophetic writers. Sometimes this may have been done with the idea that there was a special affinity between the earlier and the later writer.

. . . The fame of Isaiah as a prophet was so great that it was only natural that he should be chosen as a kind of patron for unclaimed prophetic writings, and the whole conception of prophecy had become so largely modified in the post-exilic period that a book which was only in part Isaiah's would soon be unhesitatingly referred to his authorship altogether.

That is a vital remark—with vast results, and far-reaching consequences in relation to the notion of the Bible as 'The word of God.'

Upon the beauty and energy of the translation we should like to say much, and specimens seem to plead for quotation. One in particular takes hold of us at the moment. We will quote it, only asking the reader to open his ordinary Bible at Chapter xxviii., 7-13.

* The Book of the prophet Isaiah. A new English translation, printed in colours, exhibiting the composite structure of the book: with explanatory notes and pictorial illustrations. By the Rev. T. K. Cheyne, M.A., D.D., Oriel professor of the interpretation of Holy Scripture at Oxford, and Canon of Rochester. London: Jas. Clarke & Co.

These also in Jerusalem reel with wine, and stagger with
mead;

Priest and Prophet reel with mead,

They are confused by wine, they stagger because of mead ;
They reel during their visions, they totter while giving
judgment.

All tables are full of loathsome disgorgements ; filth
everywhere.

Whom, say they, would he teach knowledge ? and to whom explain a revelation ? To weanlings, forsooth, just parted from the breast ? For he is ever gibbering : *cav la-cav, cav la-cav ; qav la-qav, qav la-qav* ; here a word, there a word. Yea through a gibbering people, and in a foreign tongue, will He verily speak to this people ! who said to them, This is the true rest, grant rest to the weary ; this is the true refreshment. But they would not hear. So to them the word of JHVH shall come : *Cav la-cav, cav la-cav : qav la-qav, qav la-qav* ; here a word, there a word. So that, as they go, they may stumble, and fall backward, and be shattered, be ensnared, and be taken.

The notes upon this highly dramatic scene are highly significant. The picture is presented of drunken priests and staggering prophets, and this mediumistic reformer, speaking for righteousness and God, is only mimicked and mocked. The words *cav-la-cav, qav la-qav* are untranslated, and are really meaningless. They are only intended as mockery. But the prophet faces the mockers, and turns the tables upon them, and cries, ‘ Truly, you shall have gibberish soon enough, when a foreign people shall come and shatter and capture you ! ’ How vivid it all is !—how exciting ! how alive ! and what a contrast to the record as it stands in the conventional Bible !

Certain passages, naturally, specially interest us. For instance, ch. vii. 14-16, reads,—‘ The Lord Himself will give you a sign ; Behold a young woman will conceive, and bear a son, and will call his name Immanuel ; because, before the boy knows how to refuse the evil, and choose the good, the land, of whose two kings thou art sore afraid, will be unpeopled.’ In the notes on this passage, v. 15 is called ‘ a misleading gloss,’ and therefore it disappears ; and, in general, all that is said is, that ‘ The name Immanuel will be to all the people a memorial of the retreat of the invading armies, and a pledge of the impending desolation of Syria and Ephraim.’ The concluding paragraph of the note says,—‘ In a traditional Arabian story

told by Ibu Hishâm, a Jew of Medina is said to have uttered a prediction, the sign of which consists simply in the fact that a boy present in the company will live to see the prediction fulfilled.' But this is common enough now, even amongst our Western commonplaces. Anyhow, this bit of ancient political rhetoric has the bottom knocked out of it, so far as any application of it to Jesus Christ is concerned.

We are keenly tempted to proceed, but we think it better to refer the inquirer to the book itself. There are, indeed, thousands of earnest-hearted men and women, who are intelligently interested in the Bible, to whom this book would give employment and enjoyment for many a long evening during the coming winter. It should, of course, be read and studied with the ordinary Bible open at the place. Nothing else would be required.

It may, perhaps, save trouble to some if we say that the chapters and verses are not printed as in the ordinary Bible, and, indeed, in all other Bibles; but a table or index on pages 214-15 will enable the reader at once to turn to the places where the chapters and verses and the notes upon them are to be found.

MR. JOHN KENSIT.

IT is certainly not entirely to our credit, as a staid and solid old community, that most great offences have to be pushed into prominence, and that great reforms have to be carried to the front, by fanatics. It has always been so, from Parliamentary Reform to Anti-Vaccination, and from the Protection of Seamen to Home Rule. It is so to-day with regard to the astonishing collapse of The Act of Uniformity, and the impudent and thus far successful attempt to set up Romanism in the Protestant State Church of England. Not that Mr. Kensit is exactly a typical fanatic. He is too fond of his fun for that, but he has in him the making of a fanatic, and of a very taking kind—with the mob.

A short time ago, at Croydon, for an hour and a half or more, he gave us a full view of himself for all he is worth:—a man evidently without reticence or subtlety of any kind; without any sense of perspective or discrimination; given to fervours, foregrounds and emphasis, painting with very crude colours and a very big brush; in no sense deep, but soon hot: a man of one idea, and one way of pumping it up and out: all excellent qualities for the making of a fanatic.

It was really an intensely entertaining hour and a half. Mr. Kensit is a curious mixture of John Burns and John L. Toole, with all John Burns' voice and swing, and all Toole's admirable fooling, with a strong suggestion of that comedian's memorable inconsequential lectures: for Mr. Kensit finishes nothing. He manages perfectly to make telling sentences, but they are like separate links: there is no chain. It does not much matter where he begins, and no one can tell, not even himself, where he will end. He simply flings his links about, but, though the links flash and jingle, the chain never comes. If he starts a topic, his average time for sticking to it is about a minute and a quarter: a chance word is enough; off he goes to something else. In his address, there was no beginning, middle or end; and there was no reason why he should stop when he did except that it would have been inconvenient to sit up all night listening even to Mr. Kensit's broad jokes, brilliant audacities and glorified rigmarole.

Two thirds of the torrent of talk went something like this:—‘I don’t believe in priests in petticoats. Let their wives wear them. But, unfortunately, Father Stanton hasn’t got a wife. He’d be all the better if he had.’ ‘There’s a gentleman hanging down his head as if he were shocked because I call that crucifix an ugly figure stuck on a bit of wood. But that would shock only a sham man. Why should a man put on a mock modesty, and pretend to be shocked?’ ‘When the people bowed down to that bit of wood and kissed it, and my turn came, do you think I kissed it? Not for Joseph! You should have seen those silly women who had been kissing the wood. They didn’t look as though they wanted

to kiss me.' And so on, with endless audacities and roars of laughter. But all was not audacity and laughter. A good deal of it was wholesome and robust sense and truth,—very rough and eloquent, and very English.

When the chairman rose to put the resolution, a well-known public man got up in the body of the hall, and very pleasantly asked for four minutes. 'Certainly,' said the chairman. The speaker then said that he was glad Mr. Kensit had done what he had done, and that he agreed with about nine-tenths of what he had said, but he surely was wrong in saying that there was nothing in the Book of Common Prayer to justify the ideas of Baptismal Regeneration, Confession and Absolution. Upon which the platform got up a clamour, and the chairman rose and told the speaker to stop, which he good naturedly did, simply remarking that they did not appear to know what English freedom was, after all! It was really a very funny ending.

THE APOSTLES' CREED.

A WRITER in 'The Church Gazette' says of 'The Apostles' Creed' that it 'contains the chief facts of Christianity—the simplest faith in Christendom.' This is far away from the truth. It is certain that this very debateable creed is a good deal responsible for keeping many out of the Church. The only undoubted truths in it are 'I believe in God, the Father almighty,' 'and in Jesus Christ,' 'He descended into hell,' 'the communion of saints' and 'the life everlasting.' All the rest is disputable, and some statements in the creed are as bad as anything could be, and only push us farther and farther away,—such as 'born of the Virgin Mary' and 'the resurrection of the body.' The creed is anything but simple. In fact, its simplicity is on a par with its historical genuineness.

There is a curious depressing cant about these matters. Nobody exactly wants to be hypocritical, but many get so used to saying a thing that at last they actually believe it,—without real re-

flection, from first to last. So with this so-called 'Apostles' Creed.' But we are quite willing to keep it prominent: it is an excellent object-lesson and an admirable test.

THE LIFE OF A LIE.

The Star tells an instructive story concerning the life of a lie. It ought to go 'the round of the press.'

The *Times* publishes a letter from a county magistrate in which he protests against having to estimate the conscientiousness of anti-vaccinationists, and encloses with his letter, as being 'admirable for distribution,' a small tract written by Mrs. Ernest Hart and published by the S.P.C.K. in 1896. The *Times* also says that this tract 'seems admirably adapted for wide circulation among the people.' We have a copy of this tract. We drew attention last year and again in February this year to the fact that it contains perhaps the most glaring falsehood which has ever been used to support the case of vaccination. We refer to that familiar statement that during the Franco-German war 23,469 French soldiers died of small-pox because their army was only to a small extent re-vaccinated, while the re-vaccinated German troops lost only three hundred and sixteen. This statement was made in the House of Commons by Sir Lyon Playfair in 1883. It was challenged and subsequently withdrawn. It was repeated by Dr. W. B. Carpenter, with an undertaking on his part that if it could not be substantiated he would publicly withdraw it. In accordance with his pledge he publicly withdrew it in a letter to the *Daily News* on 7th August of that year. It was brought before the Vaccination Commission, and was there shown to be utterly without foundation. Although we have published these facts on three separate occasions, and have directed the attention of the S.P.C.K. to them, the pamphlet is still published without any correction. The same falsehood was repeated in the debate last Saturday, and was reported in the *Times*. Although the facts were brought to the knowledge of the *Times* on Monday, that paper has refused to publish the correction, and to-day recommends the pamphlet for free distribution! We do not know what view those who desire to enforce vaccination upon the people will take of this matter, but we do know that such methods of controversy will shock any fair-minded man of any party.

We are very much indebted to such papers as *The Star*, *The Echo*, and *The Daily Chronicle*, all of which seem to be conducted on apostolic, and not on merely financial and market-rigging, lines.

A WONDERFUL CHURCH PAPER.

'THE CHURCH GAZETTE' is getting quite shocking.. The Editor of 'THE COMING DAY' shocked even the Unitarians with his book, 'Who was Jehovah?' and now here is the Rev. J. B. Heard, M.A., Hulsean lecturer, Bath, telling us that 'Jehovah' was only 'a Jewish war-god ;' and 'The Church Gazette' gives it a place of honour. Accounting for our theological wanderings in the desert, Mr. Heard says we 'first set up Jehovah, a Jewish war-god, and then set him on the throne of the universe "judging right." ' This amounts to a dismissal of Jehovah as the true Christian's God.

On its own account, in a leader on 'The Broad Church standpoint restated,' it says;—

(1.) With reference to any question raised, a Broad Churchman maintains his right to approach it without being in any way bound to arrive, sooner or later, at some predetermined conclusion. The position is essentially fundamental.

(2.) While rendering all fitting reverence to the Bible, a Broad Churchman absolutely declines to be enslaved by it, or by any other volume or document whatever; because he holds that there is no manual in existence which possesses supreme or final authority.

(3.) He considers that there is such a thing as Absolute Truth: but that this is known, and can be known, only to the Deity. That there is also such a thing as Relative Truth, and that this latter is the only form in which truth is knowable by man. . . . He therefore refuses to be tied back to any fixed standard, either of the present age or of past ages; but regards all such standards as embodying the best conceptions of truth which were attainable in their own day.

(4.) Just as he holds with a continuous advance in knowledge of truth, so he believes there is a continuous inspiration which prompts it. He does not deny that such inspiration may have acted with special power at one particular period, or at several different periods, but he refuses to believe that it was confined to certain portions of history, or that it was finally withdrawn from the world about A.D. 90. He maintains that such influence has extended throughout the whole of time, and is as truly operative now as at any previous age, and that it exerts itself not only in influencing views directly connected with religion proper, but has its domain throughout the entire range of thought.

All of which is very wonderful for a 'Church Gazette.'

THE VACCINATION TYRANNY.

A WRITER in *The Banner of Light* tells the following queer story, and adds remarks, which, in our opinion, are not much too strong ;—

Who engineered it ? When the English publishers of the ninth edition of the Encyclopædia Britannica decided on the work, they cast about to find and select the most competent men possible to revise and write the articles. They intended to have an up-to-date issue, and for that purpose made a critical survey of the literary and scientific guilds of the leading nations. They selected Dr. Charles Creighton, an eminent practitioner of London, to write the article on vaccination, then becoming a prominent topic of discussion. He was a vaccinationist, but set about his task conscientiously, determined to give the subject an exhaustive examination. He began at the fountain head, the Jennerean era, which culminated in 1796, when Jenner announced that he had found a prophylactic for smallpox. He critically examined all accessible data, following the practice of vaccination down through the years in England and continental Europe. Hospital reports, as well as those of private medical men, embracing multitudinous statistics, were digested and analyzed, the result being a change of opinion ; he became an anti-vaccinationist. He went to the publishers, telling them his investigations had forced him to write an article which probably would not be acceptable ; if so he should release them from the contract. They told him if he had arrived at a conclusion antagonizing vaccination, they should not reject the article, but publish it with pleasure, for they had selected him because they deemed him fully competent in all respects. Dr. Creighton's article was accepted and published, and may be seen and read in the original work.

One or more 'snide' or pirated editions were published in the United States, in which the article written by Dr. Creighton was suppressed, there being substituted for it an article prepared by a lieutenant in the United States Navy, advocating and defending vaccination. Here was a gross fraud, a crime worse than highway robbery, pocket-picking or garroting. Who engineered this fraud and heinous imposition ? Not a layman nor a private citizen, but some person or persons who sought to gain professionally and pecuniarily. Who would thus gain ? Plainly the Allopaths, the great majority of whom are sticklers for the Jennerean fad. Public sentiment for some twenty-five or thirty years has been developing, antagonistic to the beastly practice of injecting into the circulatory system of a healthy person corruption, charged with diseases sometimes of the filthiest type—diseases in many cases terminating in death. Sometimes brute force is used to perpetrate the outrage, and children are shut out of the public's schools in many places, to force them into the clutches of the vaccinators. The practice, even in its mildest form, is brutal, and the medical profession know it. Every physician who inserts the vaccine virus into a healthy person knows there is a terrible risk in that little

puncture. He knows that to talk about pure virus is to talk a pure lie. No vaccinator, unless he is as unscrupulous as the devil, when asked if he will guarantee the matter to be pure, will say 'yes.' Any honest vaccinator would, in answer to a like query, say 'no.'

MESSAGES FROM OUR FORERUNNERS.

It is true, likewise, that the English in general, and indeed most of the men of learning in Europe, have given up all accounts of witches and apparitions, as mere old wives' fables. I am sorry for it; and I willingly take this opportunity of entering my solemn protest against this violent compliment, which so many that believe the Bible pay those who do not believe it. I owe them no such service. . . . If but one account of the intercourse of men with separate spirits be admitted, their whole castle in the air (deism, atheism, materialism), falls to the ground. I know no reason, therefore, why we should suffer even this weapon to be wrested out of our hands. Indeed, there are numerous arguments besides, which abundantly confute their vain imaginations, but we need not be hooted out of one; neither reason nor religion require this.

JOHN WESLEY.

The Lord's heaven is immense. It consists of every people and tongue; and all are therein who are principled in the good of love and of faith.

SWEDENBORG.

The blue of heaven is larger than the cloud.

E. B. BROWNING.

NOTES BY THE WAY.

POOR FREEDOM!—‘Light’ publishes the following pathetic little paragraph:—‘The Rev. T. E. Allen’s address on “The scientific basis of Spiritualism,” prepared for the Rochester Jubilee meetings, deserves special circulation. One personal matter we notice with surprise and pain. Mr. Allen was, we believe, a Unitarian minister, and yet he can say this:—“I do not come to Rochester to solicit, incidentally, your financial support in exchange for such sincere words as I may utter upon your platforms, because you have a pathway of ease and a generous living to offer to me and to my family; for, had these things been primary with me, I should have sought them where they are to be found—and that is *not* with you—and I should not have compromised my professional progress and sailed along the ragged edge financially, as I have done for years, because I dared to speak a word for Spiritualism in my pulpit, to persist in studying psychical phenomena, and to

appear occasionally upon your platforms. I have come to Rochester, on the other hand, to speak the truth as I see it, and careless, thank God, like a Hebrew prophet of old, whether you like it or not." That the Unitarians could lightly lose such a man for such a cause is very little to the credit of people who profess to be wonderfully free.'

THE BRITISH ABROAD.—Are these newspaper men mendacious, or only ignorant? Here is 'The Sketch.' Of the British in The South African Republic it says: 'They are made to feel that they are in a foreign land where they cannot claim even the rights of citizenship, as they are understood in the United Kingdom.'

But they *are* 'in a foreign land' when they are in The South African Republic, just as much as a citizen of The Republic would be in a foreign land here. That is no one's fault. It is a simple matter of fact: unless we hold that a Britisher is nowhere in a foreign land, because he has a right to everything.

As for citizenship, a Britisher can take up the rights and duties of a citizen there on about the same terms that a South African Republican could take up the rights of citizenship here.

THE SILLY CIGARETTE.—'The New Unity' says;—'A strange and unexpected light is thrown upon the cigarette question in these days when so many young men are being examined as to their physical competency to enter the army. From many sources comes the evidence of weakened circulation, traceable to the use of cigarettes among young men. Doctor King, of Philadelphia, has published the statement that ninety per cent. of the rejected recruits are cigarette boys. Many of the Chicago physicians are reported as corroborating the statement. Last Sunday the labour organizations of Chicago passed stringent resolutions against the repeal of the city ordinance looking towards the lessening of the sale of this poison to minors, and their resolutions embodied this conclusion of the surgeons: If cigarettes are bad for boys, are not cigars bad for men? Or, to turn the argument around, if men hope to save the boys from the cigarette, had they not better begin by lessening the use of cigars among men? Let fathers apologise for smoking in the presence of their children as they do in the presence of a lady.'

But 'The New Unity' is very much behind the times. Men do not apologise now for smoking in the presence of a lady. But 'The New Unity' is published in America. Here, in London, the men drag their women and children into our unspeakably filthy smoking compartments.

AN ENGINEER'S USE FOR LATIN?—There is a pretty ray of satire in Mr. J. A. L. Waddell's book on bridge-building. He entitles his book, 'De Pontibus,' and thus explains the title;—'For five consecutive years of his early life the author devoted more than half of his working time to the study of the Latin language; and this is the first opportunity which has occurred during the twenty-two years of his professional career to put the knowledge (?) so obtained to any

practical use. Moreover, he fears that, if he be so fortunate as to be able to practice his profession another twenty-two years, no other occasion will occur to use it. So he feels the necessity of grasping this unique opportunity of a lifetime.'

WOMAN'S SUFFRAGE.—We are informed that the Legislature of Wyoming (U.S.) has passed the following resolution ;—‘ That the possession and exercise of the suffrage by women in Wyoming for the past twenty-five years has wrought no harm, and has done great good in many ways ; that it has largely aided in banishing crime, pauperism and vice from this State, and that without any violent oppressive legislation ; that it has secured peaceful and orderly elections, good government and a remarkable degree of civilisation and order, and we point with pride to the fact that after twenty-five years of Woman's Suffrage not one county in Wyoming has a poor house, that our gaols are almost empty, crime, except that committed by strangers in the State, is almost unknown, and as the result of experience, we urge every civilised community on earth to enfranchise women without delay.’

THE VACCINATION FETISH.—We do not often agree with Mr. Hugh Price Hughes' vehemence ; but somehow the following seems right ;—‘ It is difficult to understand how any human beings could have brought themselves to believe that it is in harmony with the will of God that little children should be deliberately infected with the filthy diseases of tortured calves.’

A MUNICIPAL OPERA HOUSE WANTED !—The proposal to establish a municipal opera house in London, to be paid for and kept up out of public money, is perhaps the silliest and most impudent proposal ever made to the London County Council. If London is to be catered for justly, as to opera, it would need a score of opera houses : and surely if only one opera house were provided, and that one were placed in the west end of London, it would be a public scandal. What snobbery and jobbery lurk behind this proposal ? We can scarcely believe that it is made in earnest ; but anything seems possible in hysterical London.

A GOOD EXAMPLE.—We observe with the greatest satisfaction that the Rev. H. E. Dowson, Unitarian minister, of Gee Cross, accepted the invitation of the Spiritualists in the adjoining town of Hyde, to unfurl and present a new Lyceum banner. In doing this, he made a beautiful human speech, as bright and as breezy as anything could be. This is good. It is high time to end the fashionable ridiculous tabooing of this great subject, especially by people who profess to be so wonderfully ‘ free.’

MR. HOOLEY.—Mr. Hooley hopes to pull through and to go ‘ higher than ever.’ He is making a mistake. The treadmill is abolished,—or about to be, we believe.

MR. VOYSEY AND HIS CHURCH.—In our note on this subject last month (p. 247) the word ‘now’ was printed for ‘never.’ The word ‘never,’ of course, makes better sense, and we regret the error, but it does not alter our reflections on the whole statement.

THE HOLY SHOPKEEPER.—‘The *Guardian*’ wishes to be taken as a very religious paper, and the mainstay of the Church. What does the wicked Rationalist outside think of this, from its columns?—‘We desire only the open door. It is immaterial to us how China is ruled, or plundered, or disintegrated, if only we can be sure that trade will run through it free and unfettered.’ But this is perhaps sarcasm.

THE LONDON EVENING PAPERS.—As we have said—probably more than once,—*The Evening News* is the worst of them. Here is its latest horror. One day lately, in its best column, where the latest news should be, there were about 120 lines of a rehash of old reports of burglary and murder. In large type, the odious slush is headed ‘A famous crime.’ It appears as an interview with a detective, and is nothing but a gloating over ghastly details that, if they ever appear at all, should be forgotten as soon as possible. *The Evening News*, we sorrowfully believe, knows the public taste.

OFFICIAL THANKSGIVING.—That is the worst of ‘Harvest Festivals,’ stated ‘Thanksgiving services’ and the like—that occasions arise when the thing must be a sham. Colonel Ingersoll, in one of his latest lectures, took note of this, and told the following wicked but racy story;—‘A few years ago, the Governor of Iowa issued a proclamation on Thanksgiving, calling on the people of the State to fall upon their knees, recounting the blessings of the year. A citizen of that State read the proclamation. Consequently he wrote one himself. He called the attention of God to the facts as they were. He said; “Iowa has not been prosperous. We have had poor crops; the price of corn and pork very low; mortgages increasing; the people getting poorer every day, and I don’t, oh, God, wish you to be misled by official correspondence. If you have any doubt about my statement, be good enough to send some angel in whom you have confidence, and let him report the facts.”’

EVERY DAY WITH THOREAU.

SEPTEMBER.

ESPECIALLY am I touched by his sufficiency and vigour,—as if a man had once more come into Nature who knew what Nature meant him to do with her.—*Bronson Alcott.*

1—We know but few men, a great many coats and breeches. It is an interesting question how far men would retain their relative rank if they were divested of their clothes.

Could you, in such a case, tell surely of any company of civilised men, which belonged to the most respected class?—*Walden.*

- 2—Every man will be a poet if he can, otherwise a philosopher or man of science. This proves the superiority of the poet.—*Spring.*
- 3—The expedients of the nations clashed with one another, only the absolute right is expedient for all.—*Week.*
- 4—A fact must be the vehicle of some humanity in order to interest us. Otherwise it is like giving a man a stone when he asks for bread. Ultimately the moral is all in all, and we do not mind it if inferior truth is sacrificed to superior, as when the annalist fables, and makes animals speak and act like men. It must be warm, moist, incarnated, have been breathed on at last. A man has not seen a thing who has not felt it.—*Winter.*
- 5—Most men have learned to read to serve a paltry convenience, as they have learned to cipher in order to keep accounts and not be cheated in trade; but of reading as a noble intellectual exercise they know little or nothing; yet this only is reading, in a high sense, not that which lulls us as a luxury and suffers the nobler faculties to sleep the while, but what we have to stand on tiptoe to read and devote our most alert and wakeful hours to.—*Walden.*
- 6—By sufferance you may escape suffering.—*Summer.*
- 7—One memorable addition to the old mythology is due to this era—the Christian fable. With what pains, and tears, and blood these centuries have woven this and added it to the mythology of mankind!—The new Prometheus. It would seem as if it were in the progress of our mythology to dethrone Jehovah and crown Christ in his stead.—*Week.*
- 8—When we ask for society, we do not want the double of ourselves but the complement rather. Society should be additive and helpful. True friends will know how to use each other in this respect, and never barter or exchange their common wealth, just as barter is unknown in families.—*Winter.*
- 9—Nothing makes the earth seem so spacious as to have friends at a distance; they make the latitude and longitudes.—*Letter.*
- 10—I would give all the wealth of the world, and all the deeds of all the heroes, for one true vision. But how can I communicate with the gods who am a pencil-maker on the earth, and not be insane?—*Week.*
- 11—Where is the ‘unexplored land’ but in our own untried enterprises?

* * *

There is an adder in the path which your own feet have worn. You must make tracks into the unknown. That is what you have your board and clothes for. Why do you ever mend your clothes, unless that, wearing them, you may mend your ways?—*Letter.*

12—Humility, like darkness, reveals the heavenly lights. The shadows of poverty and meanness gather around us, 'and lo ! creation widens to our view.'—*Walden*.

13—When the heavens are obscured to us, and nothing noble or heroic appears, but we are oppressed by imperfection and shortcoming on all hands, we are apt to suck our thumbs and decry our fates, as if nothing were to be done in cloudy weather.—*Summer*.

14—Books, not which afford us a cowering enjoyment, but in which each thought is of unusual daring ; such as an idle man cannot read, and a timid one would not be entertained by, which even make us dangerous to existing institutions—such call I good books. —*Week*.

15—The fates never exaggerate. Men pass for what they are. —*Winter*.

16—No face which we can give to a matter will stead us so well at last as the truth. This alone wears well. For the most part we are not where we are, but in a false position. Through an infirmity of our natures, we suppose a case and put ourselves into it, and hence are in two cases at the same time, and it is doubly difficult to get out.—*Walden*.

17—For an impenetrable shield, stand inside yourself.—*Summer*.

18—Paper is cheap, and authors need not now erase one book before they write another. Instead of cultivating the earth for wheat and potatoes, they cultivate literature, and fill a place in the Republic of Letters. Or they would fain write for fame merely, as others actually raise crops of grain to be distilled into brandy.—*Week*.

19—Our stock in life, our real estate, is that amount of thought which we have had, which we have thought out. The ground we have thus created is for ever pasture for our thoughts.—*May Days*.

20—When God made man he reserved some parts and some rights to himself. The eye has many qualities which belong to God more than man. It is his lightning which flashes therein.—*Spring*.

21—The penny post is commonly an institution through which you seriously offer a man that penny for his thoughts which is so often safely offered in jest.—*Walden*.

22—As all curves have reference to their centres or foci, so all beauty of character has reference to the soul, and is a graceful gesture of recognition or waving of the body towards it.—*Spring*.

23—I wish so to live ever as to derive my satisfactions and inspirations from the commonest events, every-day phenomena, so that what my senses hourly perceive in my daily walk, the conversations of my neighbours, may inspire me, and I may dream of no heaven but that which lies about me.—*Spring*.

24—There are in music such strains as far surpass any faith which man ever had in the loftiness of his destiny.—*Winter*.

25—What after all, does the practicalness of life amount to ? The things immediate to be done are very trivial. I could postpone them all to hear this locust sing. The most

glorious fact in my experience is not anything that I have done or may hope to do, but a transient thought, or vision, or dream, which I have had.—*Week.*

26—It is not enough to be industrious ; so are the ants. What are you industrious about?—*Letter.*

27—Objects are concealed from our view, not so much because they are out of the course of our visual ray as because we do not bring our minds and eyes to bear on them ; for there is no power to see in the eye itself, any more than in any other jelly the greater part of the phenomena of nature are for this reason concealed from us all our lives. The gardener sees only the gardener's garden.—*Autumnal Tints.*

28—You may know what a thing costs or is worth to you, you can never know what it costs or is worth to me. All the community may scream because one man is born who will not conform, because conformity to him is death. He is so constituted. They know nothing about his case, they are fools when they presume to advise him.—*Winter.*

29—The wisest definition of poetry the poet will instantly prove false by setting aside its requisitions.—*Week.*

30—We can only live healthily the life the gods assign us—I must receive my life as passively as the willow leaf that flutters over the brook. I must not be for myself, but God's work, and that is always good.—*Spring.*

WHY NOT, MY SOUL ?

WHY not, my Soul, why not fare forth and fly ;
Free as thy dreams were free ;—with them to vie ?
There thou wert bold—thou knew'st not doubt nor fear,
Thy will was there thy deed—ah, why not here ?
Thou need'st but faith to carry thee on high.
A thousand things that others dare not try,
A thousand hopes thy heart doth prophesy.
Thou knowest the Master Word, Oh, speak it clear !
Why not, my Soul ?

Let not this world of little things deny ;
Break thy frail bonds, and on those dreams rely :
Trust to the counsels of that other sphere ;
Let the night's vision in the day appear.
Walk forth upon the water ! wing the sky !
Why not, my soul ?

—FRANK GELETT BURGEES.

FOR JENNY AND JOHN.

A CONVERSATION.—Uncle: How fast you are growing, Willie ! Willie: Yes, too fast, I think, They water me too much. Why, they actually make me have a bath every morning !